

MARVIN ZONIS

Political Elite of Iran



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THE POLITICAL
ELITE OF
Iran

**PRINCETON
STUDIES ON THE
NEAR EAST**

THE POLITICAL
ELITE OF
Iran

MARVIN ZONIS



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To My Mother,
Clara Zonis
and
the Memory of My Father,
Leonard Zonis

PREFACE

Recent years have witnessed a remarkable convergence in formerly disparate disciplines and distant geographical areas. Concern for the fate of that two-thirds of the world's population living in dire poverty was occasioned by the emergence of those nations from colonialism to independence and the growth of the United States and then the Soviet Union to superpowers whose interests, always extending beyond their boundaries, now became truly international. Into these new and little understood waters ventured social scientists whose intellectual concerns could be useful for both facilitating the modernization of these new nations and formulating the foreign diplomatic and aid policies of their own nations.

Where the anthropologist had long studied went the economists, followed by political scientists, sociologists, and psychologists. The early works on development were quick to indicate that no one of these disciplines could offer a satisfactory answer to what proved the devilishly complicated problems of "underdevelopment," or "development," as it is now more fashionably conceived. Interdisciplinary studies were called for and then undertaken, not only intraculturally, but, in increasing number, interculturally as well.

It is in this latter stream that this work most neatly fits. Concerned with the course of political development in one of the oldest of the new nations, it is predicated on the assumption that the "political" concerns the interrelationships of people. And to understand and analyze those interrelationships, we must consider not only the form of government,

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the political institutions, and the ideologies, but also the attitudes and values of the political actors, the norms of the culture, and the structure of the social system. For all affect, in varying degree, the very inter-relations that constitute politics, the political process, and political development.

In this work, no attempt will be made to attribute responsibility for either the political successes or the failures of the system under investigation. Nor are sides taken in a political system whose partisan battle lines have long since been drawn. Rather, we seek to understand and generalize, to analyze and explicate the lessons for students of political development that can be drawn from an interdisciplinary approach to but one political system. At the same time, however, it is also hoped that the lessons of this political system will be noted. For the contribution that this study was designed to offer was for those social scientists who seek to formulate and refine theories that will enhance, initially, our understanding of the processes of development and assist, ultimately, in facilitating such development. But to use this work to leap from the first of these purposes to the second, to seek its relevance in the virulent politics that occasionally characterize its subject, is both premature and unwise. If this study but fulfills the former of these dual aims, it will be counted as a success by its author.

But no work of this kind ever has but a single author. The contributions of others, both material, intellectual, and emotional, are never slight and collectively may exceed those of the writer himself. For the material assistance without which neither the research nor the analysis on which this study is based could have been accomplished, I acknowledge with gratitude a Research Training Fellowship of the Social Science Research Council, held from 1963 to 1965, and supplemental grants from the Carnegie Corporation, and the College Faculty Research Fund and the Social Sciences Faculty Research Fund, both of the University of Chicago.

The intellectual contributors to this work are varied and numerous. Professors Daniel Lerner, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Lucian W. Pye, and especially Frederick W. Frey of the Department of Political Science of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, all served as my mentors. But more importantly, they transmitted a sense of the excitement of intellectual inquiry at the frontiers of the social sciences and provided me with tools that I would require to conduct my own explorations. Professor Robert A. LeVine of the Committee on Human Development of the University of Chicago was particularly helpful in the later stages of the work, when the data were voluminous and order had to be established in that informational chaos that only the computer can generate. For that chaos and the hours of tedious and laborious work that generated the data

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processing on which this study is based, Howard Rotblat, Department of Sociology, the University of Chicago, is responsible. The counsel of Frank Bamberger and Allan Herzog of that university's Computation Center is also gratefully acknowledged.

For incisive comments on the final manuscript, I wish to thank Professors Sidney Verba, Nikki Keddie, Phyllis Levenstein, and Sidney Levenstein.

For all these, there would have been no project without the research opportunities so graciously offered me in Iran and the cooperation of the many hundreds of Iranians who participated in the project. The most important of these were the 170 respondents who subjected themselves to an aggressive and often brash foreign researcher. To spare them the embarrassment that might result from their being singled out, suffice it to acknowledge here my appreciation. But none of these interviews would have been carried out in the absence of official cooperation and royal assent. His Imperial Majesty, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shahanshah, made that available with speed and kingly grace. His willingness to welcome foreign scholars is both courageous and laudable. To identify but one other Iranian whose intellectual integrity and training were perpetually at my service, I wish to thank Dr. Iraj Ayman, former director, Institute for Educational Research and Studies of the National Teachers' College in Tehran. If Iran is to take its place in the ranks of developed nations it will be through the national devotion and toil of men like him.

Finally, I thank my wife, Ella Zonis. Without her aid, this project would still be just that, a project.

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THE POLITICAL
ELITE OF
Iran

: 1 :

INTRODUCTION

Iran has been called the oldest of the new nations, a distinction accurately reflecting not only its lengthy history and venerable culture, but also its impressive successes in avoiding the status of a European colony. In recent years, Iran has augmented this reputation as *her remarkable political continuity* has set the stage for rapid economic growth and social development.

Iran's ruling monarch, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, acceded to the throne in 1941 amidst foreign occupation, economic disintegration, and savage attacks on the twenty-year rule of his father, Reza Shah. Since those chaotic days, the present shah has made a series of attempts to establish solid bases of political support. During the years following his accession, his relatively insecure throne depended primarily on the graces of the British and Russians who had deposed his father. Supported by these foreign powers and many of the elite who had served the ex-monarch, the shah reconstructed his defeated army. With his civil and military elites, the shah continued to maintain a tenuous grip on the throne after the withdrawal of the British and American troops, who had joined the occupiers in 1942, and the ultimate withdrawal of the Soviets and the collapse of their ill-fated "autonomous" People's Republics of Azarbaijan and Kurdistan.

An abortive assassination attempt in 1949 and the near overthrow of the shah by Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh (1951–1953) gave testimony to the ethereal nature of this coalition of civil and military elites. But following Mossadegh's overthrow and the shah's return to the

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throne after a hasty exile to Italy in 1953, kingly power was regained by an almost solitary reliance on the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces. For despite the efforts of Mossadegh and the Iranian Communist party, the Tudeh, the shah had never totally lost control over the military, a control that was then augmented by a burgeoning program of United States technical and military assistance.

Using the power of the military, the king extirpated Tudeh supporters within the ranks of the officer corps of his army. He then turned to eliminating the Tudeh throughout Iran and subduing the most ardent partisans of Mossadegh. After the most threatening of his opponents had been neutralized, the shah began to experiment with new forms of control. From 1957 to 1960, a royally chartered and directed two-party system was created. But its "tweedledum-tweedledee" character failed to provide a meaningful channel for political expression. The debacle of the two elections for the twentieth session of the Parliament in 1960–1961—a debacle that resulted in the dissolution of the Majles until new elections were held in the fall of 1963—testified to the bankruptcy of the two political parties.

The monarch's response to the political turmoil following the closing of the Parliament, while unexpected, was not atypical. He answered his increasingly vocal opposition by liberalizing political life. A new prime minister known to be suspicious of the royal prerogatives, independent ministers, and an easing of censorship all followed. By 1963, the shah launched a new experiment. He appealed for support directly to the masses through his Six-Point Reform Program and a national referendum. With the almost universal popular support that these moves generated, the shah once again turned to narrowing the limits of acceptable political behavior. In 1964, he gave official support to a single political party encompassing all of the elite he classed as progressive.

Building on his increased control over the political life of his nation, the shah then began to lessen and, finally, virtually to eliminate his reliance on the United States. What had initially been an absolutely necessary basis for maintaining control, had by mid-1960 become a burden with its implications of neoimperialism and foreign subservience. New commercial and aid treaties with Communist states were contracted, and these new diplomatic and economic relations were capped by a military aid pact with the Soviet Union in 1967.

Now, at last, the throne appears secure. Organized internal opposition has been decimated, while even the expression of antiregime sentiment is absent. International support for the shah's rule has been broadened to include not only the United States and its Western allies, but also the USSR and other Communist nations as well. With a firm grasp over the political process, the shah has devoted himself and Iran's continually

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increasing oil income to internal development. A mounting gross national product, social reforms, educational development, land distribution, and even a massive program of heavy industries have been the rewards.

But in the face of these widely admired triumphs, it is generally agreed that Mohammad Reza Shah has not located the majoritarian political base he has so ardently sought. The general support of the masses exists, but such support is an intangible base for royal strength. The single party remains an artificially nourished collectivity of office seekers. Thus, the shah maintains and continues to operate the Iranian political system only by incurring substantial political costs—costs that are largely determined by the relationship of the shahanshah to his political elite.

The basic assumption on which this study is based is that the attitudes and behavior of powerful individuals in societies whose political processes are less institutionalized within the formal structures of government are valid guides to political change.¹ Operating on such an assumption, we have examined the course of recent political development in Iran by analyzing its political elite.

The concept of the political elite, as used in this study, is an empirical, behavioral one. No attempt was made on a priori grounds to equate the political elite with holders of official positions in Iran's government or social structure.² Rather, the political elite were defined as those members of Iranian society, i.e., Iranian nationals,³ who exercised and pos-

¹ "When a society is organized in such a way that the will of one man, or a small group, is the most powerful of the political and social forces, such explanation must give way, at least to a very considerable degree, to a more psychological style" (Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* [New York: Macmillan Co., 1968], as quoted in "On Dictatorship," by Alexander Gerschenkron, *New York Review of Books*, 12, no. 12 [June 19, 1969]: 3). Gerschenkron criticizes Conquest's psychological emphasis and replies that "riveting our attention to the personality of the dictator tends to blind us to the *force des choses*, to the fact that is, that recurring conditions produce analogous recurring responses" (*ibid.*, p. 4). I would argue that there is no necessary incompatibility here but rather that structural and psychological explanations are complementary. Similar structural conditions will tend to call forth similar political practices. But this is only a tendency not a certainty. Moreover, it is through individuals that structural factors are manifested. The intervening variables cannot be ignored.

² A matter for empirical investigation is the "fit" between the holders of official political positions and participants in the making of important political decisions or persons to whom political power is attributed. See, for example, Fatma Mansur, *Process of Independence* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), pp. 2-3. It was an assumption of this study that no significant correlation between official position holders and actual political power (as measured by the attribution of power) could be expected on a priori grounds in the Iranian context. The assumption is based on the hypothesis that the less representative (accountable, democratic) a political system is estimated to be, the less the correlation between formal positions and actual power is likely to be.

³ It has been assumed that non-Iranian nationals who exercised significant political power in Iranian society were not independent actors but "base values" for Iranian national political actors. See Harold D. Lasswell, "Introduction: The Study

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sessed political power to a greater degree than other members of Iranian society. By power we mean an interpersonal relationship such that the behavior of one (or more) actor(s) alters the behavior of another (other) actor(s). By behavior is meant any change in the state of an individual from a given time to a later time.⁴ As Frey indicates, several subordinate concepts relating to "power" must be introduced. Two such concepts that are vital in this study may be mentioned. The scope of a power relationship may be considered "the set of behaviors of the influencee altered by the influencer."⁵ The domain refers to "the set of persons whose behavior [the influencer] alters within a given scope."⁶ The powerful, then, are those individuals whose behavior alters the widest scope of the largest domain, that is, the widest range of behavior of the largest set of persons within that society.

This definition of power does not yet sufficiently narrow our interests, for with it the investigator would find himself studying thespians, athletes, and others, who by being thespians and athletes do manage to alter the behavior of significant numbers of people. Rather we are interested in political power, that is, power exercised within the political system.

The meaning and nature of *the* political system continues to be a matter of debate even for political scientists whose legitimate concern it is considered to be.⁷ For purposes of research in Iran, the political system was defined as that pattern of interactions among actors seeking to exercise power over the allocation of values at the most comprehensive level—the national, social system level.

Another problem that confronts the wary investigator seeking to identify the politically powerful in Iran relates to the persistence or longevity of patterns of power interactions.⁸ An individual may be con-

of Political Elites," in *World Revolutionary Elites: Studies in Coercive Ideological Movements*, by Harold D. Lasswell and Daniel Lerner (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1966), pp. 16–17.

⁴ Frederick W. Frey, "Power Analysis," mimeo, n.d., p. 1.

⁵ Frederick W. Frey, "Political Development: Power and Communications in Turkey," in *Communications and Political Development*, ed. Lucian W. Pye (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 302.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ For various formulations of the concept, see Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman, eds., *The Politics of the Developing Areas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960), especially the introduction by Almond; David Easton, *A Framework for Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1965), especially chap. 2; and Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1963), especially chap. 1. For a critical look at these formulations of the political system and a further elaboration of the concept, see Frederick W. Frey, "Political Science, Education, and National Development" (Paper delivered at the Conference on Comparative Education, University of California at Berkeley, March 25–27, 1966), especially pp. 1–10.

⁸ Dahl mentions the "persistent" nature of power relations as a feature of political systems (*Modern Political Analysis*, p. 6).

sidered to exercise substantial power in the society-wide political system. But the power which that individual exercises may be a highly transitory phenomenon. A second individual may exercise power to a lesser extent, i.e., his power may be of a narrower scope or smaller domain or he may exercise that power over less-valued resources. But the lesser power of the latter individual may have existed over a longer time period than the greater power of the former actor. Or the lesser power of the latter may be widely perceived as likely to be efficacious for a longer period in the future than that of the former. In such a case, the less immediately powerful but politically longer lived individual may be considered more powerful for our purposes.⁹ The phenomenon of lasting political power tends to be especially relevant for the behind-the-scenes political manipulator or the archetypal civil servant. Never attaining to high or visible position, he nonetheless manages to exercise power continually.¹⁰

The political elite of Iran, then, consists of those Iranians who more or less persistently exercise power over significant behaviors of large numbers of people with regard to the allocation of highly prized values in the national political system.

But how to locate these men? Initially, an attempt was made to identify the politically powerful by seeking out decision makers, those Iranians who had participated in the making of crucial political decisions in recent times. Information was sought about the land reform, oil negotiations, military pacts and aid, and the like. But such inquiry in the secretive Iranian system, which strives to disperse and mask responsibility, proved fruitless. A new approach was initiated, an approach that sought to identify the powerful by locating those with reputations for exercising such power.

First, the holders of formal position within the government were identified. Then the occupants of key social roles—doctors, tribal leaders, members of the royal family, opposition leaders—were identified and a list of three thousand “general elite” was constructed.¹¹ A panel of ten persons knowledgeable about Iranian politics then attributed

⁹ Evaluations of members of the political elite based on this criterion may help to account for the lack of “fit” between reputational analyses and decision makers’ issue-orientation in community power structures.

¹⁰ Cf. Thomas Balogh, “The Apotheosis of the Dilettante” in *The Establishment*, ed. Hugh Thomas (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1959), pp. 83–126, *passim*.

¹¹ “The Search for a political elite may begin with what is conventionally known as the Government. *Conventionally* speaking, government is the institution which is so named by the members of the community in question. *Functionally*, however, only the institution which makes the severely sanctioned choices can qualify. Since the true decision makers are not necessarily known at the beginning of research, the investigator can select government in the conventional sense as a convenient starting point” (Harold D. Lasswell, “The Comparative Study of Elites,” in *World Revolutionary Elites*, ed. by Lasswell and Lerner, p. 8).

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various levels of political power to the three thousand, and a rank ordering of these general elite was made. The 10 per cent of those who boasted the greatest reputations for political power were specified as the political elite. (See Appendix I for a detailed account of this procedure.)

But why 10 per cent, why three hundred men? There is no especially telling answer for this question. All three thousand could have been referred to as the political elite. Equally arbitrarily we could have limited the political elite to four persons: His Imperial Majesty, the Shah-anshah, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi; his twin sister, Her Royal Highness, the Princess Ashraf; the boyhood companion of the shah and virtually his only trusted Iranian confidant, an ex-prime minister and now minister of the Imperial Court, Assadollah Alam; and the then chief of the State Security and Intelligence Organization, General Hassan Pakravan. Of all three thousand members of the general elite, only these four were reputed to be politically very powerful by all ten of the rankers.¹²

Three hundred were specified, not so much because a convenient cutting point fell there, but because we wished a universe large enough to allow for statements about the elite that could be considered statistically valid. Just as Tocqueville noted that the "moral authority of the majority [in America] is partly based upon the notion that there is more intelligence and wisdom in a number of men united than in a single individual," so we sought to be able to make relevant statements about the Iranian political process on the basis of a majority of the political elite.¹³

Coincidentally, this same figure of three hundred has been recognized before. Prior to the rule of Reza Shah, a perceptive foreign observer noted that "Persia is ruled by Tehran and Tehran is ruled by perhaps three hundred men, including the ins and outs."¹⁴

In the process of identifying the most politically powerful individuals in Iran, it became clear that to speak of a single political elite is, in fact, a misreading of the realities of Iranian politics. For the power attributed to one member of the general elite was sufficient to merit assigning that individual to a category distinct from and above his fellow members of

¹² The crudity of this means for identifying the political elite became evident not long after the completion of the interviews. General Pakravan was relieved of his post and assigned as ambassador to Pakistan, where he is currently serving. But within our categorization system, there would be no means of predicting that the shah had sufficient political power to dismiss Pakravan, for both received exactly equal scores of reputed power. Thus not only did this reputation scheme not result in a cardinal scale of power, but even its ordinality must be considered suspect.

¹³ Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 2 vols. (New York: Vintage Books, 1945), 1: 265.

¹⁴ J. M. Balfour, *Recent Happenings in Persia* (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood and Sons, 1922), p. 90.

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the political elite.¹⁵ We refer, of course, to His Imperial Majesty, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. The extraordinary power that the shah is able to wield vis-à-vis any other member of the elite suggests that Iranian politics can most fruitfully be analyzed through separate but complementary investigations of the shah on the one hand and the remainder of the elite on the other.

The Iranian political process, then, constitutes a system in which the two principal actors may be considered as the shah and his political elite. The decisions of the king, the dominant political actor, directly affect the political elite. But, although unanticipated and frequently undesired by the shah, the behavior of the political elite operates as an important influence on him. There is a feedback system at work in which the shah and the elite, whose makeup he has largely determined, interact and together elaborate Iranian politics.

Once this universe of the elite was identified, the goal became to study that universe in the most productive fashion, defined as an analysis fruitful for explaining the present course of politics and for predicting the likely immediate future of politics in Iran, i.e., to analyze and explain the interactions of the shah and the elite. Plutarch long ago gave one clue as to how this might best be done:

. . . the most glorious exploits do not always furnish us with the clearest discoveries of virtue or vice in men; sometimes a matter of less moment, an expression or a jest, informs us better of their characters and inclinations than the most famous sieges, the greatest armaments, or the bloodiest battles whatsoever. Therefore, as portrait painters are most exact in the lines and features of the face, in which the character is seen, than in the other parts of the body, so I must be allowed to give more attention to the marks and indications of the souls of men, and while I endeavor by these to portray their lives, may be free to leave more weighty matters and great battles to be treated of by others.¹⁶

Just as great and momentous events may be less useful indications of the souls of men, so may they be less useful than those "souls" for the kind of analysis contemplated for the elite in Iran. In a political system

¹⁵ Thus while empirical investigations of a society may reveal a marked break between the "elite" and the "nonelite," it is also the case that the elite category does not consist of an undifferentiated aggregation of individuals. For us the concept of the elite is in the nature of a continuous rather than a discrete variable. Within the elite category itself, some people are "more elite" than others. Thus the identification of an elite must reveal at least two things if it is to prove useful for empirical systemic analysis: first, who are the individuals who are in the "elite," and second, within the elite itself, what is the hierarchy of "eliteness"?

¹⁶ *The Lives of Noble Grecians and Romans*, trans. John Dryden (New York: Random House, Modern Library, n.d.), p. 801 (a discussion of the life of Alexander the Great).

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where institutions are not paramount but where individuals in their interactions constitute the essence of the political process, the souls of men, or their personalities, to use a more contemporary formulation, are of primary importance. So it was that in Iran insights to the personalities of the most powerful political actors and the interactions of these actors with each other were sought. As Talcott Parsons has cogently argued:

On the one hand, Freud and his followers, by concentrating on the single personality, have failed to consider adequately the implications of the individual's interactions with other personalities to form a system. On the other hand, Durkheim and the other sociologists have failed in their concentration on the social system as a system to consider systematically the implications of the fact that it is the interactions of personalities which constitutes the social system. . . . Therefore, adequate analysis of motivational process in such a system must reckon with the problem of personality.¹⁷

As description and explanation were the ultimate ends, an analysis that would consider both aspects of the actors' personalities as well as their interactions was contemplated. In short, we sought the "code" of the Iranian political elite.¹⁸

To do so, it was clear that ideally some form of projective tests, administered to the elite themselves, would be essential. Because of their ease of administration, it was decided to employ a series of projective questions that would allow the elite respondents maximal opportunities for externalizing subjective feelings. A search of already developed psychological testing instruments was conducted and a number of items, valid in the American context, were included in the questionnaire. Additionally, standard items pertaining to social background data, communications patterns, and political and social attitudes were included. After extensive pretesting, translation into Persian, more pretests, and revisions throughout these stages, a final instrument with some 250 questions whose data were to fill eleven IBM cards was ready for administration.

Our analysis was based primarily on the responses of 167 members

¹⁷ *Social Structure and Personality* (New York: Free Press, 1964), p. 20.

¹⁸ "By proper methods, it is possible to ascertain the 'code' of an elite, and to describe the values and objectives sought; the base values typically relied upon; and the detailed patterns of expectation, identification, and operation which are present. A scientific observer will take into consideration the principles and maxims made articulate among the decision-makers. In addition, the analyst will examine the mode of conduct displayed in typical circumstances, estimating the degree of elaboration and the intensity of all manifestations. Hence the 'code' of an elite summarizes both conscious perspectives and unconscious demands, identifications, and expectations. The measure of intensity is the degree to which the total personality is involved" (Lasswell, "Comparative Study of Elites," p. 12). See also Nathan Leites, *The Operational Code of the Politburo* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951).

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of the Iranian political elite to that Persian-language questionnaire through interviews conducted by the author. While access to active duty military officers was denied the author by the shah, those of the elite who were interviewed constitute, impressionistically, a fair cross section of the civilian political elite. Interviews were obtained with present and past officeholders (including a large number of retired military officers as well as those serving in the Senate and the cabinet), supporters and opponents of the monarch, political "comers" and those whose political star has clearly descended, members of the royal family, and commoners.

In many cases, these interviews were simple to arrange. A telephone call to an official's secretary brought a welcome response or even a direct call to the home of the individual was frequently sufficient. Some potential respondents required several telephone calls or even a letter. Others agreed only upon the intervention of a third party. In some cases a document presented to me by the shah supporting the whole undertaking was used to provide legitimacy. But that was used sparingly for fear of placing the whole project too squarely under the aegis of the royal court. (See Appendix II for a comparison of those of the elite who were interviewed and the nonrespondents.)

Impressionistically, as well as on the basis of an analysis of the data generated through the interviews, the respondents seem to have been unusually candid. Obviously, the style of politics in Iran as well as the general character orientations here described argue for caution and discrimination in interpreting the results. It remains for the reader to determine whether this has been done.

It is a major contention of this study that a remarkably small set of significant variables characterize the interpersonal relations that constitute the essence of politics in Iran. By means of a factor analysis applied to data derived from the elite interviews, four principal attitudinal dimensions were uncovered. They have been labeled political cynicism, personal mistrust, manifest insecurity, and interpersonal exploitation. They are assumed to represent the general characterological orientations that underlie elite political behavior.

These general attitudes are not unknown to other students of Iranian politics. Similar attitudes have been ascribed to the Persians by Iranian and foreign observers alike. Leonard Binder has described the means available to those "who engaged in negative system challenging."¹⁹ "Silent resistance" and "the refusal to believe" are two such techniques. Professor Binder adds that the national complement of such disbelief is "cynicism."²⁰ It is our contention that a cynical response to one's envi-

¹⁹ *Iran: Political Development in a Changing Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1962), p. 288.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 289.

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ronment is by no means restricted to the opponents of the regime. Rather, the attitude permeates the elite itself. An Iranian satirist captured some of the essentials of this cynicism in an "interview" with a mythical deputy to the lower house of the Parliament. The interviewer is questioning Deputy Qurbanali (Ali, the Sacrifice):

- Q: What is the population of your constituency?
A: Ten thousand.
Q: How many votes did you get?
A: One hundred and fifty thousand.
Q: Don't you think there is some discrepancy here?
A: I do, but I was told to shut up.
Q: How many rival candidates were there? Did anyone really get more votes than you did?
A: There were many. All of them got more votes.
Q: Then how did you *manage* to get elected?
A: That was a miracle of the ballot box.
Q: Have you been a member of Parliament before?
A: No.
Q: Why?
A: Because they did not choose me.
Q: What parties have you belonged to in the past, and now?
A: As far as I recall I have been a member of all sorts of parties. At the moment I am a member of the Old Iran party, but I shall soon join the Future Iran party.
Q: Why?
A: Because my experience has shown me that it would be the right thing to do.
Q: What's wrong with the present party?
A: There is nothing wrong with it, but the Future party has better prospects.
Q: How many times did you speak in the present term; and what is the total length of your speeches?
A: I spoke as many times, and for as long, as the speeches they gave me lasted.
Q: Who is "they"?
A: Don't you know?
Q: How many bills did you vote against and which ones are they?
A: Well, . . . about none!
Q: Why?
A: Because the bills were presented by the Government.
Q: Are you saying that one should vote for any bill presented by the Government?
A: Would you give a vote against them?
Q: What are the three most important events during your term?
A: The first important event occurred when I was sitting one day in my home, minding my own business and wondering what kind of

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a job I should try for. The radio suddenly announced in the news bulletin that I had been elected a member of Parliament! The second event was the day when the Parliament voted an increase in our salaries to 70,000 rials [\$1,000] a month. The third, when they gave us a big housing grant.²¹

As cynicism is a typical response of the Iranian elite to the political process, so is its counterpart, mistrust, typical of interpersonal relations. In discussing the place of mistrust in Persian society, one foreigner noted: "Iranians claim that it is not that they basically are distrustful or that they prefer the interpersonal relations to be the way they are, but that since no basis for altruistic trust exists in Iranian society, they can but respond accordingly to protect themselves; or, as more than one Iranian has expressed himself on the matter, 'If I am trustful, I will only be taken advantage of by others.'"²² But Iranians themselves put it more strongly. Two Tehran magazines, *Khandaniha* and *Khushe*, printed a series of vitriolic articles castigating Tehranis for their seeming indifference to the reforms of the shah and the implementation of those reforms by the civil service. A third journal responded:

The people are not indifferent, they are distrustful. If you want the truth, the people have lost confidence in everybody and everything. . . .

This distrust begins with the people themselves. People are no longer sure of their own ideas, beliefs, attitudes, or even their decisions.

This distrust in oneself, gained through actual experience, extends, naturally, to others too. They no longer trust anyone. They have heard so many lies, have seen so much creeping and crawling. . . . Whom can they trust? The people do not even trust "the people."²³

Exploitation or manipulation of others is a third orientation of the elite. A perception of others as self-interested and hostile coupled with a predilection for opportunism in dealing with other persons is a stance that has been noted in Iran for centuries. Adroitness and cleverness have been particularly valued as weapons in what is perceived as an unending interpersonal struggle. Anne Sinclair Mehdevi, an American woman who lived in Iran with her Persian husband, relates not only the extent to which interpersonal relations are governed by Machiavellianism but also how its successful application is lauded: "I was constantly regaled with stories of rascality and guile, stories told with pretenses of censure but which really gave all kudos to the trespasser . . . almost every

²¹ K. Shahani, "Interviewing a Majles Deputy," *Khandaniha* (Tehran), Jan. 17, 1967.

²² Norman Jacobs, *The Sociology of Development, Iran as an Asian Case Study*, Praeger Special Studies in International Economics and Development (New York: Praeger, 1966), p. 260.

²³ "Not Indifferent but Distrustful," *Sahar* (Tehran), July 30, 1966 (Editorial).

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day some member of our family came home with a tale of how he had been shamelessly but cleverly fleeced.”²⁴ An Iranian writer has put it differently: “All this modernity in Iran is a facade, a pretense. The man’s appearance has changed but his mentality is the same. The clean appearance has not stamped out the dirt of dishonesty; the calculating machines have not made us any less calculating.”²⁵

Finally, the Persian elite are beset with feelings of insecurity. Joseph M. Upton, one of the most perceptive interpreters of Iranian history, states on the first page of his study, “This lively and persistent feeling of both national and individual insecurity is perhaps the dominant characteristic of modern Persian history.”²⁶ An Iranian, trained in the ways of social science, has written a monograph to examine what he senses as “the manic drive of the socially active Iranian for money.”²⁷ He concludes that most of his countrymen view money or wealth as the only meaningful source of security in the face of sweeping social changes.

Clearly, then, others have sensed the presence of these attitudes among certain sectors of the population. Our data, which do not permit generalizations about any sector of the society save the political elite, support the existence of these variables. But these data not only establish and verify the presence of such attitudes among the politically most powerful individuals in the society, they also allow for an analysis that deepens our understanding of the Iranian political process. Who, for example, manifests higher levels of cynicism, of insecurity, of mistrust? What types of social background characteristics are likely to be associated with such personal attitudes? Indeed, from among the millions of eligible and would-be elite, who is recruited into elite membership? Finally, of what relevance to the political process are these variables? Is there any policy significance to the presence of these characteristics among the elite? Does it make any difference to the political system that its most powerful members have a particular set of attitudes? Or is it more important to consider the extrapersonal factors—the Iranian constitution, the influence of foreign powers, the economic and social conditions of the country, etc.?

In the course of this study, we shall examine a number of similar issues. Suffice it to say here that the data suggest unexpected results. Where we had expected that the older Iranians would have become cynical from their participation in the political system, we find the opposite. The younger elites manifest higher levels of cynicism than their

²⁴ *Persian Adventure* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953).

²⁵ Esma’il Pourvali, “What Is Civilization,” *Bamshad* (Tehran), Sept. 29, 1964.

²⁶ *The History of Modern Iran: An Interpretation*, Harvard Middle Eastern Monographs (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), p. 3.

²⁷ Khodadad Farmanfarmaian, “Social Change and Economic Behavior in Iran,” *Explorations in Entrepreneurial History*, 9, no. 3 (1957): 178-83.

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older counterparts. Where we looked for higher levels of manifest insecurity among those of the elite who had fewer institutional ties and thus fewer bases of support, we found the opposite. The more active the elite—the more occupations they have and the more organizations they have joined—the higher their levels of insecurity. Where we had expected the more politically powerful to be more involved and thus more committed to the political system and its objectives, we were again surprised. The more powerful manifested the highest levels of cynicism. The younger elite, then, are more cynical; the active are more insecure; and the powerful, the least committed.

An additional unexpected finding of our research is that these variables do not increase concurrently. For the type of career patterns that the elite have experienced alter their general character orientations. Those members of the elite who have enjoyed lengthy tenure in formal positions within the hierarchies manifest a greater tendency towards interpersonal exploitation, but less cynicism, mistrust, and insecurity. That set of variables that has been labeled exploitation appears to be the attitudinal counterpart to interpersonal manipulation and political conflict. The elite whose attitudes are the most exploitative, and, thus, appear able to manipulate others, also demonstrate higher levels of trust, security, and commitment than do their nonexploitative counterparts. But the latter are by far the more numerous. The majority of the elite, buffeted by frequent alterations of position, seem unable to establish the attitudinal bases for such behavior. Consequently, manipulation is not their forte.

In short, the data indicate that the longer and more thoroughly a member of the elite participates in the Iranian political system, the more he manifests personal attributes of insecurity, cynicism, and mistrust. The incidence of these orientations among the more powerful, more active, and older members of the political elite is above the mode for the entire panel of elite respondents. Moreover, the data suggest that individuals more recently co-opted into elite status are socialized into these patterns and manifest higher levels of these attributes as they mount the elite hierarchy.

The significance of such variables is not principally in their presence nor solely in the assumption that the mode for their distribution is higher among the elite of Iran than it would be for the elites of other political systems. Their importance also lies in two other areas. First, the variables to which single-word labels have been attached are, in fact, composites of a number of subconceptualizations whose nature and meaning reveal the theoretical bases of the general character orientations. Second, the orientations of insecurity, cynicism, mistrust, and tendency towards exploitation are highly correlated with attitudes of the

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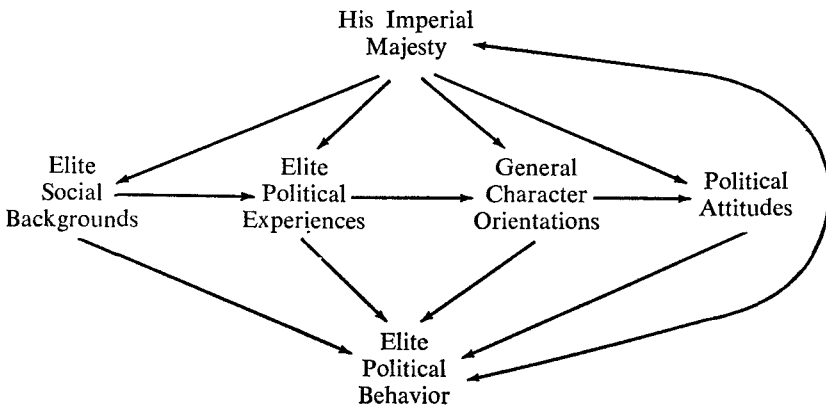
elite that are more specifically political. A number of political attitudes were similarly derived from another factor analysis of interview data and labeled xenophobia, social disdain, populist-nonelite orientation, government disdain, and orientation to the shah. Higher levels of cynicism, mistrust, and insecurity go together with higher levels of xenophobia, social disdain, elitism, and a lesser orientation to the shah.

What is being suggested is that there exist modal distributions of these attitudes that resemble, in actuality, the descriptions of Iranian society made by so many observers; that these qualities of cynicism, mistrust, insecurity, and interpersonal exploitation are then the central character variables that explicate that which is peculiar to Iranian politics; and, moreover, that these very variables are related in essential ways to the outputs of the political process in Iran.

To put it another way, the more thoroughly acculturated members of the political elite, on the one hand, display political attitudes that reflect their own general character orientations. And on the other hand, the political attitudes of the elite tend to form the foundation of the political policies of the Iranian government as those policies are influenced by the political elite. The basic relationships of influence are illustrated in figure 1.1.

FIGURE 1.1

Relationships of Influence between the Shah and the Political Elite



The decisions of the monarch affect the social backgrounds from which the elite are recruited as well as the political experiences that the members of the political elite undergo. These in turn affect the general character orientations that these individuals develop. The more specifically political attitudes that the elite hold are shaped by their back-

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grounds, the lives they have led, and the diffuse orientations they have adopted. All in turn influence the political behavior of the elite and the direction of the political system. But these patterns of influence are not unidimensional. All feed back to limit the freedom with which the shah can direct his country's domestic and foreign policies.

Nonetheless, there is no allusion here to either of the exaggerated notions advanced to explain the relationship between the king and his elite. Apologists for the monarch have rationalized his failures in terms of an allegedly refractory and powerfully entrenched clique of elite courtiers. While these courtiers allegedly filter from the royal ears all that would cause the shah discomfort, they simultaneously impede the implementation of his democratic reforms.²⁸ At the opposite pole sit bitter and outcast antiroyalists who charge the shah and his elite with fraud. They allege that the shah has purposefully surrounded himself with venal, sycophantic, and obsequious rogues enlisted to satisfy every royal impulse. Together this coterie is said to milk the nation of its resources while driving its most talented and upright citizens to exile.

Neither extremity represents the entire truth, but both contain some measure of realism. An accurate assessment of the relationship between the shah and his elite must take account of the time period and the momentum of the political system. For while this relationship has been grounded in the shah's demand for unfailing loyalty, its precise nature is a product of the political situation of the moment and the political vision then motivating His Majesty. To detail this relationship between the shah and his elite, and in the process the nature of politics in the Iranian system, we shall examine the principal actors in that system. It is to the most elite of elites to whom we first turn.

²⁸ Tocqueville commented that "the French under the old monarchy held it for a maxim that the king could do no wrong; and if he did do wrong, the blame was imputed to his advisers. This motion made obedience very easy; it enabled the subject to complain of the law without ceasing to love and honor the law giver. The Americans entertain the same opinion with respect to the majority" (*Democracy in America*, 1: 266).

:2:

THE SHAHANSHAH OF IRAN AND THE COMPOSITION OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

*The Shah wouldn't know he were Shah
if it weren't written down.*
Brecht, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*

His Imperial Majesty, Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Shah of Shahs, Light of the Aryans, is, as his titles might indicate, the central figure in Iranian politics. Since coming to the throne in 1941, the shah has demonstrated a capacity for preserving his position all but unheard of among the nations of the developing world. Through foreign occupations and foreign-sponsored separatist states, internal uprisings, tribal challenges, assassination efforts, and thwarted military *coups d'état*, the shah has managed to husband his support, to experiment with new forms of control, and, ultimately, to expand his political power.

Indeed, the entire reign of the shah, with temporary setbacks, can be characterized as a quarter century in which the civil and military bureaucracies have continually expanded their control over the activities of the population at large while the shah has even more relentlessly expanded his power over the bureaucracies. In both relative and absolute terms, this monarch is more powerful than his father and than any previous Iranian ruler. This king of kings can, in no political sense, be considered merely the "first among equals." He, personally, without the aid of advisory councils, alter egos, or close confidants, makes the thousands of decisions that allow the government to function. From the appointment or promotion of officers in the army to the decisions as to whether or not to pave the main street of Tabas, His Imperial Majesty is the arbiter.

Mohammad Reza was the first son and third-born child of Reza Khan,

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an illiterate or semiliterate officer in the Russian-commanded Persian Cossack Brigade. Two years after the birth of his son, Reza Khan was to command the Cossack Brigade, and with it provide military support for a coup led by a journalist, Seyyed Zia ed-Din Tabatabaie, against the ailing Qajar regime. Six years after the boy's birth, Reza Khan, having long since replaced the Seyyed as prime minister, exiled him along with a number of his more vocal opponents, silenced most of his remaining internal critics, ousted the last Qajar, and established himself as Reza Shah, the first ruler of the new Pahlavi dynasty.¹ With his coronation in 1925 came the designation of Mohammad Reza as crown prince.

The crown prince's childhood appears to be a near parody of a future monarch's upbringing. Surrounded by servants and sycophants, protected by older military officers, and supplied with playmates from the children of the elite, he always managed to be the first in his class at school. Numerous photographs show the youth dressed in military uniform taking the salute of honor: from the graduates of the Officer Academy to the Boy Scouts of Iran, he early was the subject of immense deference. Besides the servility of the court, the crown prince had other significant childhood experiences. As a young child, he was considered rather weak and sickly. Shortly after he became crown prince, he was struck by typhoid fever and wavered near death for weeks. His frail nature and childhood illnesses heightened the protective and almost isolated atmosphere in which he was raised.

One final experience contributed to heightening the effects of these others. Until the age of six, the boy lived with his mother and brothers and sisters. When he was invested as crown prince, however, his father decided that the future monarch needed a more "manly education." Thereafter, he was separated from his mother and sisters, raised by a French governess, and educated in a specially organized school with a group of "carefully selected" elite boys.²

Perhaps to isolate his son from the debilitating atmosphere surrounding the court, Reza Shah sent the boy to study at Le Rosey secondary school in Switzerland. The king was later to look back at this period and recall: "I was to stay in Switzerland about four years, a tremendously important period in my life. The democratic Western environment moulded my character to an extent that was second only to my father's influence."³ Other evidence suggests that the crown prince was not, in

¹ It is interesting that perhaps the most articulate critic of Reza Khan's decision to assume the throne was Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh, then a member of Parliament. As the prime minister in 1953, Mossadegh nearly brought about the downfall of the Pahlavi dynasty.

² Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961), p. 52.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

fact, subject to quite the "democratic Western environment" reported. Reza Shah, concerned with his son's "original frailty," dispatched a personal physician to supervise the crown prince's health.⁴ A Persian tutor, his brother, and two boyhood friends comprised the remainder of the retinue.⁵ It would seem likely that this Iranian clique and ready-made peer group isolated the aspiring monarch from some of the ruder consequences of the democratic environment of Le Rosey.

Whatever the influence on the crown prince of his experience abroad, his return to Iran in 1936 found him once again immersed in the atmosphere of the court. He entered the Military Academy, graduating two years later as a second lieutenant at the head of his class. Shortly afterwards, he was appointed by his father to be inspector of the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces.

In 1939, in what was apparently his first great service to the monarchy, his country, and the legitimacy of his father's rule, he was married to Princess Fawzia, the sister of King Farouk of Egypt. Although a daughter was born a year later, the marriage apparently was a personal failure—the Egyptian ruling family proving no more compatible to an Iranian than it did to the Egyptians.

And so the boy lived until the age of twenty-one, when in 1941 Great Britain and Russia invaded his country. Wary of growing German influence on Reza Shah and fearing an Iraqi-type pro-Axis coup, the two powers demanded Reza Shah's abdication, sent him into exile, and established his son on the throne. It seems clear that the young king was ill-prepared for his new role. A deadening court atmosphere of servility and sycophancy had isolated the new king from many of the pervasive problems of Iran and their possible solutions, and limited his own capability for dealing with them. His father had been a strict disciplinarian at home and an authoritarian at court. His Imperial Majesty remembered that as crown prince he used to discuss details of Iran's domestic and foreign policy with his father. But he hastily added, "I, and all the officials of my father's Government, had such respect for him and were so much in awe of him that 'discussion' with him had none of the give-and-take the word implies. I advanced my views and made hints and suggestions, but discussion in any usual sense was out of the question."⁶

The king also had countless examples of his father's forceful methods for dealing with his officials. To this day, Iranians look back with wonder at Reza Shah's lightning and unannounced inspection tours of public projects. In the earlier years of his rule, he would almost invariably find

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ One of the four boys was the son of the ill-fated minister of court, Teimourtash, who, falling afoul of Reza Shah's temper, was relieved of his post. At that point, his son was forced to leave Mohammad Reza and return home.

⁶ Mohammad Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, p. 64.

the project in near collapse and decay, despite the glowing reports of progress sent to Tehran. Charging the responsible official with completion by a given date, Reza Shah would return on that very day, weeks or months later, and find the project completed, or else. That it was frequently the "or else" alternative was clear to the crown prince: "Proverbially, to get things done in Persia, one must both reward and punish. My father relied more on punishment than he did on reward or even encouragement. In his view there was no reason to wax sentimental about a man doing something well, because that was his duty. On the other hand if my father learned of a man who was doing something poorly or dishonestly, he would live to regret it."⁷

All these elements—personal sickness; enforced separation from his mother and sisters; a stern, powerful, and dominating father; and a milieu replete with sycophants—seem to have resulted in the young king's being filled with self-doubt and fears of his own weakness.⁸ In his autobiography, the shah relates a conversation revealing these perceived inadequacies:

My father said that he wanted to improve the government machinery to such a degree that, if he should die, the day-to-day process of administration would operate almost automatically without the need of continuous supervision from the top.

I was still rather young and perhaps not very mature; and I took his remark as an insult. "What does he mean?" I thought. "Does he think that if he were gone I couldn't take over and continue his work?"⁹

With the Allied invasion and the abdication of his father, then, this young and self-doubting man took the throne. His country was occupied and effectively controlled by powerful foreign nations that had recently destroyed, in a matter of hours, the Imperial Iranian Armed Forces. These were the same armed forces that his father had devoted his life to modernizing and to which he had directed the major share of his country's resources during his rule. Among his own people, the new shah was surrounded by courtiers, politicians, and generals, more experienced and older, who had served his father for years. They quickly moved to consolidate their own power bases, independent of the throne. Finally, a torrent of domestic opposition, silenced, exiled, or incarcerated by Reza

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49. Widely held charges against Reza Shah suggest that this recollection is faulty, i.e., not all disgraced officials "lived to regret it." Minister Teimourash, some claim, lost his post and his life as a result of Reza Shah's ill will.

⁸ It is not unlikely that His Majesty's avid commitment to vigorous, physical activities, such as skiing, is in the form of compensation for perceived self-weaknesses.

⁹ Mohammed Reza Shah Pahlavi, *Mission for My Country*, p. 65. Note that His Imperial Majesty refers to his thoughts rather than to an expression of those thoughts to his obviously stern and overbearing father.

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Shah, was released. Enveloped in flowing praise and panegyric a few months before, Reza Shah was suddenly vilified and damned by his enemies, not surprisingly, but also by many of his apparently warmest supporters.

None of this was lost on the young king. His self-doubts and fears of weakness were reinforced by an actual inability to do as his father had done or as Iranian kings before Reza Shah had always done: to rule. All that which the crown prince had been taught to revere had crumbled. His father was debased and maligned for his alleged corruption, ignorance, and tyranny. The much-heralded Iranian army—in whose uniform he had been invested as crown prince—now resembled the rabble of Qajar times. The modern bureaucracy that Reza Shah had hoped to build more nearly resembled an inefficient and virtually autonomous collection of corrupt and nepotistic cliques. And the ultimate trust of the monarchy—the very independence of Iran—had been lost.

To the amazement of many foreign observers and at least grudging admiration from domestic opponents, the shah faced and overcame these early obstacles. Working within the weaknesses of self and system, the shah strengthened his hold on the throne and the hold of the throne over the political elite. With interruptions and setbacks, he has continued the process to the present day. As Farouk, Feisal, Ben Bella, Sukarno, Menderes, Nkrumah, Batista, and Trujillo have fallen by the wayside of political leadership, the shah has preserved his throne, enhanced his power, and maintained the integrity of Iran.

Many answers have been advanced to account for the shah's political longevity, but they all share the common failings of oversimplicity and a lack of exclusivity. That the shah has the support of foreign governments, well-equipped and efficient armed forces for internal control, a pervasive secret police, a subservient and cowed political elite, and rigid control over the civil liberties and personal freedom of the population may or may not be true. If these are true of Iran or, at least, partly true of Iran, they were also true or partly true of other nations whose rulers did not enhance and ultimately preserve their positions. And more importantly, if these phenomena are true of the Iranian political system, they constitute second-order explanations. That is, they do not account for the successes of His Imperial Majesty in strengthening his position. Rather, these phenomena are characteristics of that success. A more adequate explanation must be sought in the interplay of his style of rule with the attitudes and expectations of the political elite, those whose relations to the political process allow them to execute, thwart, or alter his wishes.

The style of rule that His Imperial Majesty has unfolded and elaborated since coming to power centers about (1) controlling the size and

compositions of the politically influential segments of the Iranian population; (2) manipulating the behavior of the politically active and influential segments of the Iranian population, including the political elite;¹⁰ (3) limiting the nature of the demands made by the political process as articulated by the general population; and (4) satisfying, to the maximum extent, those demands that are articulated.

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO ELITE STATUS

The basis of the shah's policy of controlling the size and composition of the politically influential is one of recruitment by co-optation. That is, all elites and those who because of unusual popularity, charisma, wealth, skills, or knowledge are considered potential elites or counterelites are co-opted into elite membership by being offered prestigious office or other rewards. High-status positions in the civil bureaucracy, Imperial Court, Parliament, universities, or any number of royal commissions are used as counters in the shah's attempts to incorporate all potentially relevant individuals.

Specific representatives of the Ministry of Imperial Court have been commissioned by the ruler to designate and seek out politically relevant individuals. Working through personal contacts, reports of the intelligence services, and the ambassadors of Iran (for students abroad), these representatives are then charged with offering the kinds of rewards or positions that would recruit the designee into the system.

This co-optative method of recruitment to the ranks of the elite fills two principal functions: uncovering talent and hindering the formation of counterelites. In the former sense, personal representatives of the shah are able to identify individuals with valuable skills or training, but individuals who are currently outside the monarch's immediate scrutiny. There may be an individual of unusual capability filling a relatively menial post. A young student in Iran, Europe, or America may demonstrate unusual capacity in his university work. An Iranian with valuable skills may have finished his foreign studies and, attracted by the higher salaries, remained abroad. All these individuals can be located and induced, with suitable material or other blandishments, to use their skills and training for the regime and Iran.

The second function that this recruitment-by-co-optation serves is to restrain the formation of counterelites. In the words of Fred W. Riggs, "the rise of counter-elites [is] part of a much broader phenomenon . . .

¹⁰ By "politically influential" we refer to a far larger number of Iranians than the political elite whom we have ambitiously specified as the most politically powerful 10 per cent of a general elite. The politically influential would include the remaining general elite and a substantial number of others.

COMPOSITION OF THE POLITICAL ELITE

namely the 'differentiation' of a population as it becomes mobilized but not assimilated."¹¹ In Iran, individuals with the qualities to lead or, indeed, form, a mobilized counterelite rarely do so. They lack the incentive, for they are rapidly assimilated. And precisely that which they value, they receive as elites: be it status, power, money, or foreign travel, the rewards of recruitment by seduction are usually satisfying.

Like so many other political practices in Iran, this one—buying off the potential opposition—has a long history. In the early twentieth century, W. Morgan Shuster, an American brought to reorganize Persia's finances, commented on one aspect of this:

One of the most remarkable examples of Persia's peculiar financial chaos was a system of "pensions." According to the loosely kept records of the different Ministries, the Government was expected to pay out each year to nearly 100,000 different people throughout the Empire the sum of about 3,000,000 tumans, in money and grain.

The greater part of this strange burden had been inherited by the Constitutional Government from the regime of the former Shahs. . . .

. . . Fully nine-tenths of the pensions allotted were pure graft. All the grantees enjoyed large pensions.¹²

Presently, the co-optative system takes several forms. Outright pensions are still granted to elites or counterelites, the monarch's Pahlavi Foundation frequently serving as a conduit.¹³ In addition, facilities and conveniences are provided the elites and potential elites. Thus a building originally designed to serve as a headquarters for the secret police was completed at a cost of some \$1 1/2 million and designated a Palace of Youth. Entrance to the building is restricted, however, to "those, from 19 to 30, who have higher than secondary school educations."¹⁴ But the most frequent reward for co-optation remains a high-status position within the bureaucracy.

One major effect of this method for the recruitment of new elements into the elite may be found in the nature of the political process that ensues. Politics becomes intraelite, rather than interelite. Political issues are not formulated to serve as rallying points for elite cliques. The role

¹¹ *The Ecology of Public Administration* (New Delhi: Indian Institute of Public Administration, 1961), p. 125.

¹² *The Strangling of Persia: A Record of European Diplomacy and Oriental Intrigue* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1912), pp. 267–68. In addition, Professor Nikki R. Keddie informs me (personal communication, Feb. 2, 1969) of the widespread co-optative use of pensions to the ulema (religious preachers, scholars, and jurists) to lessen their protests in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

¹³ See, for example, the reports that Majles Deputy Habibi (an ex-Olympic wrestling champion) had his Pahlavi Foundation "allowances" cut for refusing to follow directions in the Parliament (*Farman Magazine* [Tehran], July 14, 1966).

¹⁴ *Kayhan International* (Tehran), Nov. 17, 1966.